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15 September 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: SSCI Personnel Review Team Meeting []
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1. On 12 September [] Special Assistant to the Director, Office of Development and Engineering, briefed Charles Battaglia and John Nelson of the SSCI Personnel Review Team on the importance of people to the mission of OD&E. [] of the Office of Personnel and the undersigned also attended. [] of OD&E assisted [] in his presentation. He used several sets of viewgraphs to illustrate the organization, mission, budget, objectives and some of the personnel problems faced by the office. The briefing lasted for more than three and a half hours.

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2. He said that the office has its own procedure for tracking applicants processing, but they also work with the Office of Personnel. On the morale of the office he noted that their current building was substandard and that the move [] was a management decision in the right direction.

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3. [] spent considerable time in a review of the attrition of senior officers from the office. He compared the number of departures in 1985 with previous years, stressing that the trend rather than the number was the most disturbing factor. To help the staffers understand why the officers left he presented case studies which outlined their reasons for leaving and the compensation packages offered to them. These were very revealing because some of the officers were able to double their salaries in their new positions. [] noted that they enjoyed their work in OD&E but left only because of family economic demands. He argued that the Agency must find ways to compensate our best people that at least come closer to the offers made by the private sector. There was discussion among the group about steps the Agency could make to have a more flexible pay system, which could reward performance rather than seniority.

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4. On recruiting, [] told the staffers that they are working to reduce the time it takes to bring an applicant on board. OD&E cannot maintain its personnel needs from the outside and so it recruits from other offices within the Agency. He concluded his comments by discussing a list of initiatives that he has drawn up at the request of the DDS&T management which should improve the quality of life in the directorate. He believes that most of them can be accomplished with the authority now held by the Director. He simply said to the staffers: "Let us use our authority." Throughout the briefing [] articulated the conviction that people in OD&E did very special things and should be treated differently. He believes that our personnel practices should show a "touch of class." The staffers responded that if the agency needed additional authority to improve its programs along the lines suggested [] that we should not hesitate to make it known to the Committee and that it was a part of their objective in this review to bring out such needs. They were clearly impressed with his briefing and asked for a copy of his viewgraphs which he agreed to provide.

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5. A few other comments made during the briefing are worthy of note. [] reminded the staffers that while Congress acknowledges the Director has plenary authority in Section VIII, it often fails to recognize that we are different from the rest of the government and the Community. In addition Congress often asks why we should do something when the rest of the government is not doing it, even if it is a good thing. Lest the staffers get the mistaken impression that OD&E is the only office concerned about the attrition of senior officers and the quality of life in the Agency, [] reminded them that many other offices shared that concern and were working on the problem. Additional briefings will be scheduled by DDI and DDO experts to fill the SSCI staff in on what the rest of the Agency is doing in this area.

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